ACCOUNT OF TRIP TO SAPPORO

FAX TRANSMITTAL

TO: **Steve Mallicoat**
and Mom Mallicoat

5 pages

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Hi, Cuties!

Well, we've been here a month and in some ways it's flown by and in some ways it seems like forever!

It was great talking to you from the airport. I thought it was going to be a real ordeal taking those 20 big boxes, trunks, etc, but it turned out to be pretty straightforward except when we had to get them from terminal one to terminal two at the Tokyo airport. It was raining and we had to move them by shuttle bus! We could get two boxes per baggage cart, so we lined up 10 carts and made a kind of procession out to the shuttle. We could only get a few on each bus trip, so I was stationed at terminal two to receive them and Ted was at terminal one putting them on the bus -- very goofy!

Our Japanese hosts who met us at the Sapporo airport were briefly amazed, but too polite to make any comments. Fortunately they brought two vans and a car and several strong people to take us to the Guest House. By the time we repacked everything through the night before we left, all the order I had started with was gone, so as our hosts stood by I had to look into each box to see if there was anything we needed for the first week. They carried those boxes up to our room and took the rest to store at their office. Needless to say, doing the choosing in such an exhausted state, I made several goofs, but I couldn't bear to ask them to drag those boxes around again.

Anyway, when we saw that the new office is in the prettiest part of Sapporo (not like the old office which was sort of downtown), we decided we would rather get an apartment nearby than commute by subway from the Guest House. By the time we started looking at places, it was almost time for us to move to a hotel for a few days because the Guest House had previously been booked, so, to make a long story short, we took practically the first apartment we saw so we could move directly into it and skip the hotel.

first sight, we found another

Although it's an OK place and just 5 blocks from the office (or the Lab as we call it), it's pretty plain -- 9th floor of a 10-floor building. A pretty view of the nearby mountains, but not much space, hard to have one of us working and the other sleeping (as is often the case) and basically not very homey. But we figured, what the heck, it's just a year. So we started

looking for used and/or cheap furniture to put in it. We went to buy a bed from a young American couple (from Beaverton yet!) and it turned out their apartment which is the same rent, but bigger, has a guest room, homier and closer to the Lab, hadn't been rented yet and they were scheduled to leave on Dec 5th. So we thought and thought about it and decided to forfeit our deposits on apartment #1 and take apartment #2. So we'll be moving in there on December 15. We've rationalized that if we had stayed at a hotel or the Guest House we would have lost the equivalent of the lost deposit anyway, so it all works out the same -- or so we tell ourselves.

We will be sleeping on a traditional Japanese futon/mattress-type arrangement, but the guest room actually has a Western-style bed, so you'll both be able to get good sleep when you come to visit! I haven't had time to do much research on the ice-sculpting project, but I think there's time - it's not until February. Someone from the Mayor's office came the other day to interview Ted -- he's my only resource so far. I'll try to contact him this week - the only problem is he doesn't speak much English. Oh, I just thought of something -- we've been invited to lunch at the American Consulate this coming Wednesday -- I think I'll ask HIM how to do this! I don't want to approach our hosts to act on our behalf until I'm a little clearer on the possibilities. (See last page of this fax for an example of the AMAZING sculptures they do!)

Mom, we want to treat you to a trip over here next year. I ask everyone when is the best time for you to visit and the answer seems to be late June or early July. The greenery is at its peak, but the crush of vacationers hasn't happened yet. Hokkaido (the northern island we're on) is apparantly a very popular vacation spot -- other Japanese come here in winter to ski and in summer to get away from the heat of the lower islands. So start looking at your calendar and see how June looks to you.

It's been exhausting trying to get everything set up here and still manage Joel and all of our Sausalito business by remote-control, but things are almost in order. We have a local bank account and I've almost got it arranged to be able to wire money from our Sausalito bank to this bank. Then we can get cash from the cash machines around town. That's been the hardest thing to manage - money! We have to pay cash for everything, including rent, electricity, etc. But we can't deposit a foreign check to our local bank, we can't cash a personal check, and they don't take credit cards in many places. So far we've been totally dependent on American Express for cash advances -- an expensive way to get cash. It's so frustrating to have money in the bank in California and not be able to get at it. Hope to test the wire transfer process this week.

It's surprising how few foreigners (gaijin) there are here. We met a few scholars from Europe and South America at the Guest House, but didn't really get to know them. An American came to interview Ted for a local newspaper, but we haven't seen him since. Our most likely friend (American) at this point is a young woman named Anne whom we met at the Multimedia Conference last week. She's real energetic and fun, has been here 6 years, speaks Japanese and is very generous with offers to help. We went out to play for the first time since we got here last night with her and a visiting American named Eames -- the four of us had a great evening, good food and beer, great conversation and much hilarity.

One of the greatest sources of amusement for English-speaking people like us is the wacky English sayings people sport on their jackets or T-shirts or in shop windows. Phrases like "WORLD SPINASH" or "Unknown yourself" or shops named B'2nd or KCheap. And the

wacky architecture just knocks us out! Ted and I are always nudging each other at some new sign or saying and just completely cracking up.

It's been a long time since I've lived without a car -- since Manhattan, I guess. It means we get a LOT of exercise, since we walk everywhere, usually carrying 15-20 pounds of stuff. But it's a lovely neighborhood and when we first arrived, the gorgeous autumn colors were all around us. That didn't last long -- within a week we had our first dusting of snow; then we went back to autumn until about two weeks ago when it blizzarded for 70 hours, leaving about 9 inches of snow to slog through. Then the snow went away and it was even warmish for a while. But yesterday (Saturday) morning it began again and hasn't stopped. I know that one of these times, maybe this time, it will stay until April!

Neither one of us has learned as much Japanese as we would like to yet, but we've both just begun listening to tapes and we're trying to pick up a few words each day. I'm still working on the Katakana alphabet so I can read more signs, menus, grocery packages, etc. I'm only about halfway through the alphabet -- doesn't really do me much good 'til I get the other half. We've had lots of "surprises", both at restaurants and with groceries. Some were nice surprises and some were not. I thought I might be buying peanutbutter one time and it turned out to be some kind of sweet/sour bean paste -- haven't figured out what to do with it yet.

We're slowly, but surely, finding the things we need -- good but cheap restaurants, inexepensive household goods, and best of all, for me, a great farmers' markety kind of place right near the Lab (and our next apt) -- lots of fresh fruits, veggies, fish and flowers at reasonable prices. In fact, I'm going there just as soon as I fax this to you to get the fixin's for a nice Sunday supper.

I'd love to hear from both of you. Faxing really works great -- faster than mail, cheaper than telephone. Hope you're well and happy. Did you get my Happy Birthday message, Mom? Hope you did have a happy one. I'm still looking forward to your 80th in 2001. Did you have a nice Thanksgiving? Ted and I celebrated by wandering around the Susukino area (nightclubs, video game clubs, Pachinko parlors, etc) and being dumbfounded by some of the architecture. We found a quaint little place to have chicken udon (noodles). I haven't seen anything remotely resembling turkey here yet, but there sure is a lot of fish, crab, shrimp and other seafood around. Thank goodness we like it.

Well, I guess I'll send this off now. We're both working very hard -- Ted's doing great design work and has a great (we hope!) team of programmers who appreciate his work. I hope to be through with all the horrendous administrative stuff within a week or so -- then I can concentrate on Internet explorations. They've given us a high-speed setup here and the Lab is paying for unlimited use of it, so I want to take advantage of the opportunity. Have you had a chance yet to see what that's all about? It's truly a whole new world.

Steve, could you fax me back one of your business cards? I've met a couple of people who are returning to the States next year and want to settle in Oregon. I can of course just write out your numbers, but would rather hand them a card. (I'll glue the faxed info to a regular business card.)

What are your plans for Christmas? I don't want to buy a bunch of decorations, so I think I'll just put lots of candles and red ribbons around our new place. We'd like to have some parties for our friends and colleagues. The Japanese make a big deal out Christmas in terms

of decorations, shopping, playing Christmas carols, etc, but it's not even a holiday! The main December holiday is December 23 - the Emperor's birthday (I don't know which Emperor). And the really big holiday is New Year's. Our friend Professor Tanaka (the man who arranged this whole HyperLab deal) and his wife are taking us with them to the Shinto shrine on New Year's Day -- supposed to bring good luck for the coming year, etc. That's the big gift-giving time, too, although I don't have a clue what kind of gifts we're suppposed to give -- guess I better start researching that now.

Lots of love from both of us to both of you. I hope I can spend some time with you in January when I come home -- maybe on the way back to Japan. I don't know the dates yet, but it's looking like maybe January 10 to 31 or something like that. Ted will only be there for a few days since he can only be in the US for 30 days in the next year -- gives him some big tax benefits. I'm hoping to find a guest room in the houseboat community to rent for the three or so weeks I'll be there.

OK, this is it -- sayonara.

Mar

Sapporo in Brief

Population
Japan's fifth largest city with a population of 1,712,305 (1992).

Climate
Sapporo enjoys a mild climate with a year-round average temperature of 9.4°C (48.9°F). The average temperature in January is -4.9°C (23°F); in July, 20.8°C (69°F).

Budget
¥1,235.1 billion (US$9.5 billion) in 1992.

International Financial Services
Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, Hokkaido Bank, North Pacific Bank, Sapporo Bank, others.

Consular Offices
Republic of Korea, the United States, Russia, the People's Republic of China, Australia and twelve honorary consulates.

Transportation
Two airports serving domestic and international carriers: New Chitose Airport with approx. 30 daily flights from Tokyo (a 1 hr. 30 min. flight), and Sapporo (Okadama) Airport. The Seikan Undersea Tunnel provides convenient rail service to Sapporo from Tokyo. Sapporo's mag-lev train to New Chitose Airport is in the planning stage. Sapporo also has a modern subway.

International Activities
Eleventh Winter Olympic Games (1972); First Northern Intercity Conference in 1982, and international headquarters of the secretariat of the Northern Intercity Conference Committee; Sister Cities: Portland, U.S.A.; Munich, Germany; Shenyang, China; Novosibirsk, Russia; Sapporo International Trade Fair (1990); Twenty-third Asian Lions Forum (1984); First and Second Winter Asian Games (1986 and 1989); Winter Universiade 1991.

Cultural and Recreational Facilities
Twelve ski grounds, three ski jumps, cross-country ski courses, art galleries, museums, concert halls, libraries, Maruyama Zoo, sports arenas and stadiums, municipal swimming pools, Sapporo Art Park.

Research and Education
Sapporo Techno Park; 21 colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education; Hokkaido International School, Sapporo International Guest House, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) training courses.

Festivals
Sapporo Snow Festival in early February; Lilac Festival in late May; Summer Festival from the end of July through August 20; Chrysanthemum Festival from October 31 to November 3.

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Giant snow sculptures at the 43rd Sapporo Snow Festival: the zodiac sign Virgo (top), and the American White House.

44th Sapporo Snow Festival, Feb. 5-11 1993

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